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SUPPLEMENT TO THE NATIONAL REPUBLICAN.

FOR THE NATIONAL REPUBLICAN.

THE MEDICAL COLLEGE OF OHIO.

Mr. Editor.—Most of your readers know, that there is in this city an institution, denominated the Medical College of Ohio. It is, in its nature, and objects, a *public* institution; and every body in the city and state, has an interest, direct or indirect, immediate or remote, great or small, in its success. Its government has been confided, by the Legislature, to a Board of 11 Trustees, 10 of whom reside in the city, and have held their places for some time. Many of the physicians of the State are of opinion, that the administration of this Board has not been faithful, impartial and intelligent; and, last spring, those of Green and Warren counties, passed a series of resolutions, declaratory of these alleged facts, and calling on their brethren throughout the state, to aid them in an application to the Legislature for the appointment of a new and enlarged Board, drawn, in part, from the county. They also appointed a committee of five members, to collect and disseminate information, on the subject. In the summer, the chairman of this committee addressed a letter to me, as one who knew something of the institution, asking for some account of its past and present condition. I gave him none—and in September, he wrote again, when I prepared and transmitted to him a long letter, containing a great number of documents relative to the school. The facts which they embrace, went to impeach the conduct of the Board, in this, that they had shown to one of their professors, Dr. Pierson, a citizen of New York, an act of favoritism, which had already injured, and, in its progress, was likely, still further to injure, the institution. In attempting to account for this overweening and disastrous partiality, for a citizen of a distant state, whose claims on a place in the Faculty of the school, have never yet been perceived by its pupils or the physicians of our city, I ventured to ascribe it to the influence of his brother-in-law, Col. Samuel W. Davies, a member of the Board. The committee to whom my letter was addressed, at length made a publication, and it constituted the longest chapter. Coming to the eyes of the Board, they forthwith made reply, in pamphlet form; and not content with this, Col. Davies, one of its authors, made a separate reply, in another pamphlet. Passing by the former for the present, I propose to notice only the latter. Unable to overturn the facts which I had set forth, Col. Davies resorted to a denial, of having exerted any influence whatever, in procuring the original appointment of his brother-in-law, or in obtaining for him the favors which have been since granted; and, also affirms, that the late Dr. E. H. Pierson, the uncle of the professor, and another member of the Board, never did any thing to effect his nephew's election. Now, the object of this communication is, to state facts from which I drew the inferences, that the folly of the Board in this appointment, and the later proceedings in relation to professor Pierson, were prompted by those gentlemen.

I state it, then, as a fact, that in the year 1821, when I was a professor in the College, Dr. E. H. Pierson, recommended his nephew to me, for a professorship. Afterwards, the uncle became a trustee, and I can scarcely suppose, that he forgot, in his new and influential situation, the interests of one whom he had previously nominated. At the time the appointment was made, Col. D., the brother-in-law, was, also, a member of the Board; and, as I have supposed, unites his influence with that of his uncle. This, however, he denies. But I still think, that but for the presence, in that honorable body, of two relatives, making nearly a sixth part of the whole number, some other ordinary and inefficient man than Mr. Pierson, would have been called to the chair of Materia Medica. How, in fact, come the Board to know, that the city of New York contained such an aspirant, if they did not learn it from his kinsmen? They had certainly never heard of him, either as a writer or lecturer. He was appointed five or six years ago, and who, in the west, has yet heard of him, except in the pamphlets to which I have referred? one of which informs us, that he is the son of a revolutionary officer, a graduate of Princeton College, and has received the degree of Doctor of Medicine, from the University of Pennsylvania. This, to be sure, is rare and high commendation; but it would have been higher still, for the writer to have felt and said, that such commendation was unnecessary: That professor Pierson, had not lived forty years, without making himself known: That his writings, his lecture-room eloquence, his moral and professional power in society, had made society familiar with his life and character. But my business is with his biographer, rather than himself.

I have already said, that Col. D. denies, having been in any degree influential in obtaining for professor Pierson the favors which were lately granted to him by the Board, at the expense of other professors, and of the peace, dignity, and prosperity of the College. I shall proceed to state the reasons of my belief.

In the month of February, 1831, when Col. D. and myself were in Columbus, he proposed to me a union between the Medical College of Ohio, and the new Medical Department of Miami University, by taking three professors from each; and stated to me, that professor Pierson was one of those, whom he would select from the former. The Colonel was, at that time, the agent of the Board, at our seat of government. Afterwards, in the month of June, when the Trustees of the College, themselves, undertook a consolidation, Col. Davies was one of a standing committee of three, to bring it about; and the chief difficulty was to find a place for Prof. Pierson, in the union which they themselves projected, and were urging upon the Miami Faculty. Without a moment's warning, they dismissed three of their long cherished professors, each of whom thought himself at least equal to prof-

P.; but they had no influential relatives in the board; and although they were citizens of Ohio, and members of the faculty prior to his election, still his claims to retention were respected, and theirs overlooked.

He was, it is true, transferred from Materia Medica to the Institutes of Medicine, to make room for Dr. Eberle. To this chair, although one of the most elementary in the schools, he very justly felt himself incompetent, and asked for fifteen months to prepare himself. Without any hesitation the Board, Col. D. being a member, complied with this request, and assigned his duties to Col. D. in this?

Again, in the succeeding spring, 1832, new favors are required and granted. A committee is raised, of which Col. D. is once more a member, and this committee gravely recommend the expulsion of Dr. Henry, for the purpose of providing a different chair for Dr. Moorhead, that by his transfer from the Theory and Practice, a new situation might be found for Dr. Eberle, and that of Materia Medica, re-opened to prof. Pierson, the Institutes of Medicine, for which he had been eight months preparing himself in New York, being at the same time abolished, although one of the most important chairs of the school. That Col. D. urged this arrangement, is fact communicated to me by Dr. Eberle, whom the Colonel visited expressly for that purpose. Here, I think, again are strong symptoms of a family influence in favor of prof. Pierson. It prevailed with the board, and was consummated, by as violent an act of injustice to Dr. Henry, and as unwarrantable a suppression of a professorship—the Institutes—as ever, perhaps, disgraced a public institution.

Finally, on the 28th of December following, Col. Davies is one of a committee of two, to draft the annual report of the board to the Legislature, justifying all these proceedings.

Thus, that gentleman has been on all the committees (and is the only member who has) which the Trustees have appointed to manage prof. Pierson's case, for the last two years, and still he claims to have exerted not the least influence in the matter. I have stated the facts, and every reader can form his own conclusion.

I have spoken freely, but not unjustly of prof. Pierson. He is, I have been told, an amiable, inoffensive, retiring, unsocial, enterprising, studious, upright, silent, unambitious, travelled gentleman, and I believe it all; but whoever heard, except from his biographer and brother-in-law, who seems to intimate it, that he possesses vigor and originality of thought, impressiveness of speech, animation of feeling, and a lecture-room personal presence, without most of which, no man, who desires to see the interests of medical education prosper, should accept a professorial chair. You may ask, Mr. Editor, whether the existing controversy (provoked, as I will hereafter show, by professor Pierson's friends) cannot be prosecuted without bringing his qualifications into account. I answer, that it cannot; for the very reason that his friends in the Board have sacrificed the peace and interests of the college to his advancement. Thus it is, that weak but worthy men, through the compassion of their friends are billeted upon public institutions, where their utmost efforts can accomplish nothing for the public good. When the acts which place and retain them there are to be canvassed, their qualifications must, of course, be discussed, and their unfitness exposed.

DANIEL DRAKE, M. D.

February 1, 1832.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATIONAL REPUBLICAN.
MEDICAL COLLEGE OF OHIO.

Mr. Editor.—Will you and your readers consent to be amused or edified, as the case may be, with some remarks on the constitutional history of our Medical College? I shall take it for granted that you will, as constitutional topics are the order of the day.

Seven cities are said to have disputed for the honor of Homer's birth-place, and up to this hour, it would be quite possible to raise a controversy as to that of Gen. Jackson. A dispute in some respects of a similar kind has been engendered in this quarter concerning our Medical school; a fact which, in the absence of more conclusive proofs, may be received as evidence of its celebrity. I have not the honor of having commenced this quarrel, though generally, the prime mover, as you know, of the civil wars, which agitate the profession in Cincinnati. The credit of getting up that which is now raging, is fairly due to some Trustees of the College, who, although not physicians, regulate the manufacturing machinery, and have, therefore, a right, occasionally, to engender little strife.

The champion, who threw down the glove, in this instance, was Col. S. W. Davies. On the 27th of January, 1832, that gentleman inserted in the Cincinnati Daily Gazette, an anonymous publication, which concluded with the following sentence:

"If the school established in 1819, which was abolished by a repeal of its charter in December, 1825, as will appear by referring to the twenty-fourth volume of the laws of Ohio, page 8, had any property belonging to it, no part of that property came to the hands of the Trustees of the existing institution; and in justice to those Trustees, it ought to be known, that they have established the present Medical College, under a charter devised by themselves, and enacted by the Legislature on their petition."

"That the entire endowment of the institution is of their procuring, and that in its establishment, they have not been benefited by any thing that was done, under the first charter, or that appertained to the first school."

"It is a fact, verified by the statutes of the State, that the medical college established in 1819, was abolished by the repeal of its charter in 1825; and that in the same year the new school, now in operation, was chartered and endowed. The result, then, of the whole matter is, that Doctor Drake obtained a charter, *without an endowment*, in 1819, and established a medical school which failed. The Trustees obtained a charter, *with an endowment*, in 1825, and established a medical School, which is now in the full tide of successful experiment."

The board of trustees, finding that the glove cast by one of their members was not

taken up, themselves entered the ring, and on the 29th of the following May, issued a more formal declaration of war, in which they set forth to the world that the "College commenced its first session in 1824." Thus it appeared at the outset, that the party provoking the contest had not agreed on the date which should enter into their manifesto.

No one, from this or some other cause, appeared in the defensive, until the month of December, when the Third District Medical Society made a publication, in which was a letter of mine, in reply to a second application concerning the origin, progress, and present state of the College. In that letter I ventured to question the correctness of the declarations which I have just quoted, and asserted that the institution went into operation in the autumn of 1820. The Board were not slow in replying, and Col. Davies forthwith published a second edition of his own *separate manifesto*, to which he appended his communication of the previous January.

I propose, with your permission, to dissect the whole, and although living dissections may be painful to the dissected, they must, in this instance, blame themselves for coming under the knife. They have laid themselves on the table, and invited its action. I shall give them as little pain as possible; for they are my neighbors, and some of them, I am sure, would not have done me injustice, if the *esprit du corps* of the Board had not required it.

The matter stands thus. Having, by partiality and preference for Dr. Pierson, compelled me to resign, (on which event I made no public complaint) they were seized with an apprehension that my friends might be displeased, and think that my early labors in forming and organizing the school and its auxiliary, the hospital, entitled me to justice from the Boards of both establishments, they adopted, as a means of justification, the scheme of attempting to prove that the present Medical College of Ohio is totally distinct from that chartered, on my application, in 1819, and, therefore, that I have no higher claims to a place in it, than their protege, Dr. Pierson. This, to use a military phrase, is the position from which I propose to rout them.

The Medical Department of Transylvania University was projected in 1814 or '15. In 1816 I was appointed one of its professors, but a faculty was not organized till the autumn of 1817. In the spring of 1818, I resigned, and came home with the express and avowed intention of attempting the establishment of a similar school in this place, where, as far as I know or have ever heard, such an institution had not been thought of by any one, certainly by none of those who are now or have ever been either its trustees or professors. Now, had I continued in Lexington, it is a fair presumption that many years would have rolled away before an effort would have been made at this place, and that the present College could have *been in futuro*, as you Latinists would say.

Early in the year 1819 I made a visit to Columbus, and presented to the General Assembly the *projet* of a Medical school, with a bill for a charter. The present head of the

board of trustees accompanied me on other business, and can testify that the proposition was entirely a new one in the Legislature.

Some of the members thought it unnecessary, others supposed it was for my own exclusive benefit, and others preferred to have it located in Columbus or some other central village, entirely unaware of the necessity of placing it in a large town. By patient explanations these objections were obviated, and the bill which I carried up was passed into a law without a single important alteration.

It was modelled after that of the Baltimore school, in this, that the professors were the corporators and governors, and consequently, there was no board of trustees.

One of the professors appointed by the Legislature did not accept, and another, who was expected to take a place in the school, when elected declined doing so, in consequence of which no faculty was organised that year. Meanwhile, the presses of the city were put in requisition, and all who felt disappointed in not getting professorships opened a fire upon myself and my project; the thunders of which must still reverberate in the ears of those who, at that time, lived in the city. In the autumn of 1820, however, an organization was effected, with four professors and 24 pupils; seven of whom were graduated the next spring. During the session I again visited Columbus, and by three weeks of unabating importunity, aided by the Representatives of this county, especially Gen. Harrison, Capt. Brown, and M. T. Williams, esq. and several enlightened members from other parts of the State, together with a considerable number of country physicians, who wrote letters on the occasion, I succeeded in obtaining the present charter of the Commercial Hospital and Lunatic Asylum, with a sum of money to erect an edifice, and half the auction duties of the city, forever, as an endowment.

Returning with these grants, I was forthwith assailed with greater virulence than ever in the newspapers and in town-meetings; and for some time it was uncertain whether the boon of the State would not be rejected. By this charter, the professors of the College were made, *ex officio*, the gratuitous medical attendants on the hospital; but were to have the privilege of introducing the pupils of the College into it, as a school of practical medicine; and the moneys paid by them for this purpose were to go into the treasury of the College, for the purchase of books, anatomical preparations and chemical apparatus. Thus the labors of the month of January, 1821, not only provided a seat of practical medicine, but a permanent endowment for the College; both of which were acquired for it, before the board of trustees had any existence.

At the same time, I presented a printed memorial to the General Assembly, praying for pecuniary aid, from which I shall make the following extract:

"We have already seen that the endowed universities of Ohio have not the revenues, nor the location, that would enable them to adopt

and foster the Medical College which your honorable body has solemnly constituted; and it is therefore on legislative inuidence only, that its immediate guardians can rely, for the means of supplying the wants, which, after their own industry and enterprise have been brought into the utmost state of requisition, must still remain unsatisfied. For themselves, the Professors solicit nothing; they ask assistance for the Institution only.

The following are some of the important objects which this assistance might be made to effect: 1. The augmentation of the Library; 2. The collection of a Museum of anatomical preparations; 3. The purchase of Chemical apparatus; 4. The erection of an edifice, with suitable apartments for the reception of these collections, and the accommodation of the Classes during lecture hours. By whatever bounty these might be obtained, they would be the property of the corporation, and cannot therefore be expected to be contributed by the Professors themselves, were their resources, equal to such liberality."

The second session of the School in the autumn of 1821, commenced with five professors and a class of 32 pupils, seven of whom, at a public commencement, the ensuing spring, received the degree of Doctor of Medicine.

At this commencement, in public addresses to the graduates and citizens assembled, I dwelt, emphatically, on the necessity and importance of assistance from the State, and, thus, spread abroad in society, as far as I had it in my power, the importance of a liberal endowment of the institution. In addition to all these things, I distributed a printed circular throughout the whole valley of the Mississippi, making known, the great natural and statistical advantages of Cincinnati, for a Medical School. Such were some of the labors, which laid the foundation of the Medical College and Hospital in this place, the latter of which was endowed with half the auction duties, and the former with the fees which might be paid by the students, for admission into the wards of the sick. Both were permanent. That of the Hospital was magnificent, and known, the great natural and statistical advantages of Cincinnati, for a Medical School. Such were some of the labors, which laid the foundation of the Medical College and Hospital in this place, the latter of which was endowed with half the auction duties, and the former with the fees which might be paid by the students, for admission into the wards of the sick. Both were permanent. That of the Hospital was magnificent, and known,

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